

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 2 and 5-8, without prejudice, and please substitute amended claims 1, 3 and 4 and add new claims 9 and 10, as follows:

1. (Amended) A method of manufacturing glass parts for connecting optical fibers, comprising:

placing a glass tube having an internal hole into a frame; and heating predetermined parts of the glass tube from outside the frame while applying pressure into said internal hole of the glass tube so as to expand said predetermined parts, thus forming tapered portions;

wherein the frame restricts an increase in an outside diameter of the glass tube.

3. (Amended) A method of manufacturing glass parts for connecting optical fibers as claimed in claim 1, wherein the heating of said glass tube and the application of pressure into said internal hole of the glass tube are carried out while drawing said glass tube in a longitudinal axial direction thereof.

4. (Amended) A method of manufacturing glass parts for connecting optical fibers as claimed in claim 1, further comprising cutting each of the predetermined parts of said glass tube to obtain an open end in which one of said tapered portions is formed,

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C3 after the heating of said glass tube and the application of pressure into said internal hole of the glass tube.

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4 9. (New) A method of manufacturing glass parts for connecting optical fibers as claimed in claim 1, wherein the glass tube has open ends, and at least one of the open ends of the glass tube is tapered in such a manner that a continuous curved surface is formed at a boundary between the at least one of the open ends and said internal hole of the glass tube.

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10. (New) A method of manufacturing glass parts for connecting optical fibers as claimed in claim 1, wherein the glass tube is formed by placing and joining a plurality of glass elements together in such a manner that a through hole is formed between the glass elements, forming a periphery of the joined glass elements into a predetermined shape, and then drawing the glass elements.
